

May 8, 2006

Letters to the Editor  
The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
P.O. Box 371  
Milwaukee, WI 53201-0371

Dear Editor:

**MUMPS Outbreak is a serious concern**

Dr. Norton's May 8<sup>th</sup> commentary ("Mumps outbreak may not be as scary as you think") may have been overly reassuring. With about 2000 cases so far, our country is in a mumps epidemic the likes of which has not been seen for several decades. Wisconsin and Milwaukee are heavily involved.

About 90% of people vaccinated against mumps will be immune for life. Vaccinated or not, mumps can be very serious. About 2-5% of mumps victims this year have been hospitalized, some in intensive care. There has been at least one death.

Historically, mumps causes meningitis in 10% of cases, testicular inflammation in about 1/4 of men, and miscarriage in about 1/4 of women if infected in their first trimester. Other rare but even more serious complications can occur.

The City of Milwaukee Health Department takes this outbreak very seriously. Since April 1<sup>st</sup>, we've given hundreds of MMR vaccines. We've worked closely with UW-Milwaukee, the Milwaukee Public School System, and many others to limit mumps spread.

All Milwaukeeans should take this outbreak seriously too. Make sure you are completely up-to-date on your immunizations, and call your doctor immediately if you think you might have mumps. More information is available at [www.milwaukee.gov/mumps](http://www.milwaukee.gov/mumps).

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